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EXAMINER

HYLTON, ROBIN ANNETTE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3727

DATE MAILED: 02/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/677,371

Applicant(s)

SCHWOEBEL, ECKHARD

Examiner

Robin A. Hylton

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 October 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3-5-04.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the additional container attached to the drinking cap in a “clamping manner” and the funnel opening being “narrower” than the can opening must be shown or the features canceled from the claims. No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because they fail to show the plastic material of the drinking cap (by alternating thick and thin lines) as described in the specification. See MPEP 608.02 for guidance. Any structural detail that is essential for a proper understanding of the disclosed invention should be shown in the drawing. MPEP § 608.02(d).

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Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

3. The drawings are objected to because in figure 3, "IV" is used rather than "4". Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR

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1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

4. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

5. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: in the first line of page 5, "cup" is misspelled and in the description figure 4, "IV - IV" should be changed to "4 - 4".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

6. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: in line 3, "clamped" is misspelled. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. Claims 3-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 3-5 each recites the limitation "the additional container". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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9. Claims 1,6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Blow, Jr. et al (US 4,098,439).

Disclosed is a beverage can with an upper can collar (unnumbered) surrounding a can opening closed by a closing member (not shown), characterized by a drinking cap (10) to be clamped onto the can collar and having a drinking opening, wherein the drinking cap (10) comprises a funnel (36) to be supported on the top wall of the beverage can, the funnel guiding liquid from the can opening to the drinking opening, and wherein the funnel (36) has a funnel opening (32) at the lower end that contacts the can opening with form fit. See figure 6.

10. Claims 1,6,8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eads (US 4,752,016).

Disclosed is a beverage can with an upper can collar (21) surrounding a can opening (17) closed by a closing member (14), characterized by a drinking cap (18) to be clamped onto the can collar and having a drinking opening (28), wherein the drinking cap (18) comprises a funnel to be supported on the top wall of the beverage can, the funnel guiding liquid from the can opening to the drinking opening, wherein the funnel opening (28) is narrower than the can opening and wherein the drinking cap (18) has a circumferential wall with an inner bead (24) snapping behind the can collar (21).

11. Claims 1, 6-9, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Berro (US 6,450,358).

Disclosed is a beverage can with an upper can collar (38) surrounding a can opening (46) closed by a closing member (40), characterized by a drinking cap (10) to be clamped onto the can collar and having a drinking opening (20), wherein the drinking cap (10) comprises a funnel (22) to be supported on the top wall of the beverage can, the funnel guiding liquid from the can opening to the drinking opening, wherein the funnel opening is narrower than the can

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opening, wherein the funnel (25) has a funnel opening at the lower end that contacts the can opening with form fit, and wherein the drinking cap (10) has a circumferential wall with an inner bead (18) snapping behind the can collar (21). See figure 5.

12. Claims 1,6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by van der Meulen et al (US 4,715,510).

Disclosed is a beverage can with an upper can collar (23) surrounding a can opening (26) closed by a closing member, characterized by a drinking cap (1) to be clamped onto the can collar and having a drinking opening (21), wherein the drinking cap (1) comprises a funnel (12) to be supported on the top wall of the beverage can, the funnel guiding liquid from the can opening to the drinking opening. See figure 4.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blow.

Blow teaches the claimed cap assembly except for snap-fitting the drinking cap to the can collar.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to since the examiner takes Official Notice of the equivalence of frictional-fit engagement and snap-fit engagement for their use in the closure art and the selection of any of these known equivalents to connect a cap to a container rim would be within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

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15. Claims 1-5 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over van der Meulen in view of Bernhardt (US 4,340,138).

Van der Meulen teaches the claimed drinking cap except for the additional container.

Bernhardt teaches it is known to provide a container with a closure having an additional container within the closure.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of an additional container to the cap of van der Meulen. Doing so provides a container for a food item so as to allow for carrying the beverage and a snack with one hand.

Conclusion

16. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Various prior art closures teaching features similar to those disclosed and/or claimed are cited for their disclosures.

17. In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, Group 3720 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (703) 872-9306. This practice may be used for filing papers not requiring a fee. It may also be used for filing papers which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into Group 3720 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

18. It is called to applicant's attention that if a communication is faxed before the reply time has expired, applicant may submit the reply with a "Certificate of Facsimile" which merely asserts that the reply is being faxed on a given date. So faxed, before the period for reply has expired, the reply may be considered timely. A suggested format for a certificate follows:

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I hereby certify that this correspondence for Application Serial No. _____ is being facsimiled to The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via fax number (703) 872-9306 on the date shown below:

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate

Signature_____

Date_____


19. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robin Hylton whose telephone number is (571) 272-4540. The examiner can normally be reached Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern time).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lee Young, can be reached on (571) 272-4549.

If in receiving this Office Action it is apparent to applicant that certain documents are missing, e.g., copies of references cited, form PTO-1449, form PTO-892, etc., requests for copies of such papers should be directed to Errica Miller at (571) 272-4370.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148 or may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RAH
February 10, 2005


Robin A. Hylton
Primary Examiner
GAU 3727